

Nitric oxide sub partu: safety and efficacy

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Members of the guideline group:

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- N₂O is not as potent as the epidural but has a significant effect on pain relief as compared with placebo. In addition, there are other good effects on the birthing and no adverse effect on the progression of labor.
- The pain relief is achieved by a continuous inhalation in the concentration 50/50 N₂O / O₂.
- Side effects are common but harmless and comprises predominantly nausea. It is safe for the fetus and harmless to the staff at the correct use of appropriate equipment.
- N₂O mixers with demand valves or double mask with local exhaust ventilation can be used in order to comply with the recommended occupational exposure limit (50 ppm in DK). In addition, there should be general ventilation in the delivery room
- Midwives should be trained in proper handling and ensure the correct use by the delivering mother.
- Conclusion: The use of N₂O as analgesia during labor is safe for the mother, fetus and staff when equipment is up to date and used in rooms with well-functioning hood.